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was found an image of the building, inverted, of course, and uncertain in formation, because of the irregularity of the retina on which the image was impressed.

The "retaining power" of the retina has long been known. Such toys as those in which, for instance, the figure of a man sawing wood are drawn in parts, so that, when rapidly revolved, the figure seems to perform the act, are based upon this principle. Modern photography has given us some wonderful things of the kind. But the power in question is a very limited one. It will be seen in the above experiment that the object was well defined and brightly illuminated, and that the eyes were fixed upon it for a considerable time. No such thing ever could take place at the time of a murder. The "visual purple" is not an exquisitely sensitive substance like photographic bromide of silver. If it were, we should be blind from the retained images of numerous objects all confused and mixed up on the retina. And, again, even granting the absurdity of the murderer's image being actually there in visible form on the retina, how could it be photographed? I have struggled with many a difficult subject in practical photography, but I should not like to grapple with one like this. It must be borne in mind that the retina is not flat, but is a *concave surface*. How to successfully photograph such an image on such a surface I do not know.

ELLERSLIE WALLACE, M. D.

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#### NEWSPAPER ROW AND NATIONAL LEGISLATION.

LEGISLATION is naturally influenced by public opinion. Newspapers reflect and, in a smaller degree, mould it. The Washington correspondent gives the public his views, or those of the paper he represents, and often voices the sentiments of his own party leaders. There is little non-partisanship in journalism. The correspondent not unnaturally, often unwittingly, and sometimes purposely, colors situations. His writings mirror his own ideas or prejudices. His attitude on a public question is often peculiar to himself. It is generally dictated by the policy of the paper he represents. That depends on his personality and the degree of confidence imposed by his editor on his judgment. Usually the correspondent influences his paper and is affected by it. If he has served it for a length of time his ideas and those of the paper become the same. He generally writes what he believes. He is ordinarily a man of strong convictions, often pessimistic and cynical by reason of his experiences with the more selfish side of life.

The average of honesty and integrity among correspondents is high. It equals that of any profession. They do not lobby, though there may have been isolated cases of it. Necessarily, they often unknowingly misrepresent because of a lack of details, or incorrect information, sometimes given them by interested parties, for some Congressmen and Senators are not above using deceit for their own ends. Instances could be cited where they have misdirected newspaper men, seeking to create a favorable or hostile public impression of pending legislation.

There is great temptation to paint a story and make it picturesque, to romance a little, that the despatch may be the more interesting. It is the hardest tendency to resist, but it is no more unusual than the habit in ordinary life. As a rule the correspondent seeks to do right, to be fair. His work is hasty and under stress. He must judge on slight evidence, hear a thing, get new details, and often assume the rest. A suggestion sets a train

of thought working, a conclusion is reached on a premise that may have seemed insignificant. Study of character, of legislation, of past events, of their sequence, of history, experience guides him in his judgment. He is oftener correct than inaccurate. When he errs he as a rule is quick to correct it. Though a newspaper correspondent, wittingly or unwittingly, misrepresents a public man or question, colors a story, or is unjust, the truth becomes known sooner or later. He may elevate a man temporarily or lower him. If a man be given the wrong place in public estimation, the error rights itself after a while. The weakness and incompetency of a man or his dishonesty soon become known if he be exalted too much. His honesty and ability are assigned their proper niche in public estimation if he is improperly placed. The newspaper correspondent serves to make a public man's abilities apparent or his shallowness known.

A legislator is benefited by being a "newsman." That does not mean a man who tells all he knows, gabbles, and gossips about without thought or reason. The unreliable gossip is discredited. A newsman is one who knows what news is, how to tell it tersely to the correspondent, who is frequently superficial in his study of a public question. If an official be courteous, thoughtful, communicative, accurate, he is appreciated on the "Row" and receives many favors, for a newspaper man is human. He welcomes a courtesy, and returns it when possible. No favor is greater than the giving of information. The newsman, if he speaks, is given better attention. If he introduces a bill, it is noticed. Whatever he does attracts the newspaperman's eye and is referred to in his despatches. The haughty, secretive, mysterious, discourteous, thoughtless man does not have that fate. He is not necessarily, though he often is, attacked. Unless he does something to merit it, he receives but perfunctory consideration. This is often unkind, but it is natural.

Washington correspondents have never combined in favor of legislation. They have several times joined to defeat men whose conduct or animosity to them seemed to justify it. A Speaker was once driven to private life and a Vice-President defeated for renomination by reason of such a union, and there have been other instances of the use of power. If the Press Gallery united in favor of any proposition its power would be immense. Though there was no union of action almost every correspondent last session attacked a trust showing its attempt to dictate legislation favorable to itself. The voice of the "Row" is cast for honesty in legislation. The fear of exposure has undoubtedly prevented much fraud. If the newspaper men discover a job they attack it. They have saved the United States many a dollar in that way. Sometimes they do not see it and at others think they see a job where there is none.

The correspondent deals little with the personal life of the public man. He overlooks his weaknesses unless they be flagrant or the man poses as a great reformer and is a demagogue, or claims to be a "Christian statesman" and is a hypocrite. If he ascertains a man can be bribed, is dishonest, he exposes him and follows him relentlessly. Possibly he is not sufficiently charitable. Sometimes he is too much so. His estimates of men are sometimes wrong, but oftener right.

Correspondents are all patriotic. Faith is always kept by a newspaper man. He must have the confidence of those with whom he deals or his usefulness to the paper he represents is destroyed. He must be ready to lose his position rather than break faith; resist the temptation to publish a

story if given him confidentially, no matter how interesting or important it be. To keep a secret is his religion. If a man is known to be untrustworthy, if he reveals what is told him for personal information and not for publication, he might as well leave Washington. His own fellows shun him and will not confer with him, while the politician refuses to talk with him. The keeping of faith is the best policy, and it is natural to most newspaper men.

Discussion of public questions is frequently, probably generally, started by the correspondent. He interviews the legislator, and makes public his ideas. He stirs the waters. The people do the additional thinking, and are swift to see the meat of the thing. They scent newspaper injustice, discover misrepresentation, and discount partisan coloring, generally getting the correct view of a question, or the proper estimate of a man.

To a greater or less extent the correspondent influences legislation. The exact measure of it cannot be estimated. That depends greatly on the character of the correspondent, his experience, grasp of affairs, the acuteness of his understanding, accuracy, fairness, ability to forecast happenings, and to judge of the influence of seeming trifles by others and the history of legislation. The greater the paper a man represents, the larger its circulation, the better its representation, the wider its influence and that of its representative. The voice of the "Row" is for the most part beneficial. Unfair partisanship and "faking" injure the correspondent and destroy his power. To be influential he must be of good reputation. Newspapers are widely read in Washington. They convey information to the public man as they do to his constituents. The attitude of the paper or its correspondent, measured by its character, if it be from his district, guides the public man to a degree. New men are more sensitive to criticism. Old ones get blunted. A correspondent's influence on legislation—the power of the "Row"—cannot be measured. It is greatest as representing public opinion. It is frequently overestimated. Care, courage, accuracy, are requisite. The newspaper man's errors are remembered and his accuracies generally forgotten. His influence on legislation depends on himself.

ALBERT HALSTEAD.

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#### THE CAT IN LAW.

THE learned Attorney-General of the State of Maryland has recently struck a cruel blow at the cat, which is calculated to deprive that harmless and necessary domestic animal of its inalienable rights. It came about in this wise. A certain citizen of Baltimore stole a fine Maltese cat from a neighbor, who had him arrested for theft. When the case came up for trial the prisoner's counsel entered the plea that it was impossible for anyone to steal a cat, as that animal is not property, and that to take forcible possession of a feline, even though it be a pet one and wear a ribbon and answer to its name, is not a legal offence. The judge held this argument to be good, and the Attorney-General, to whom the case was appealed, agreed with him. The latter in his formal opinion, declares that the cat is really nothing but a wild animal, that it is of no use to man, and that the taking of a cat without the consent of its owner is not an indictable offence. Commenting on this opinion, the newspaper says:

"The eminent lawyer who has made this cruel decision must have passed a wild and reckless boyhood in which hours and days and nights were spent in chas-